

ST. PETER'S  
ABBEY

*newsletter*



Vol. 11, No. 3    Winter    1988



# Abbot Jerome's activities

*By Abbot Jerome Weber*

There was a luncheon in the Legion Hall in Humboldt on Oct. 29 for the benefit of the VON (Victorian Order of Nurses). This organization does excellent work in Humboldt, especially among the senior citizens, and deserves our support. I am always glad for such an occasion to help them out financially. The nurses have been a great help to Fr. Edward here at the Abbey.

Bishop De Roo celebrated his 25th anniversary as Bishop of Victoria Oct. 30-31. I have known him through all these years and so attended the celebration: the banquet on Oct. 30, and the concelebrated mass at St. Andrew's Cathedral on Saturday, Oct. 31. While in Victoria I met Grant and Vivian Maxwell, Oblates, who are retiring there.

On that same Saturday evening I took the ferry from Victoria to Vancouver. While in Vancouver I visited my brother, Victor and family, and the three Ursuline Sisters of Bruno, who teach there, and also Mary Smith who lived at St. Peter's for many years.

After that I went to Mount Angel Abbey, near Portland, Oregon, where Bro. Basil was studying. I had an enjoyable visit with him, with the monks and Abbot Bonaventure Zerr, who was our retreat director a few years ago. It is always interesting and instructive, too, to visit another Benedictine Abbey.

On the morning of Nov. 6 I concelebrated mass with the RC bishops of Saskatchewan at the annual convention of the Catholic School Trustees in the Centennial Auditorium in Saskatoon. In the afternoon there was the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan bishops and the major superiors of religious communities in our province, in order to discuss common concerns of our church.

The R.M. of St. Peter's celebrated its 75th anniversary on Dec. 10. On behalf of St. Peter's Abbey and St.

Peter's Abbey, I brought greetings during the banquet at Annaheim.

On the last day of school before Christmas, Dec. 18, I offered mass with the staff and students of St. Augustine School.

I officiated at the mass at St. Elizabeth's Convent during which Sr. Lauraine Saretsky made triennial vows on Dec. 31.



**Dec. 31 — Abbot Jerome received the temporary vows of Lauraine Saretsky a new member of the Elizabethan Sisters, who has completed the two-year novitiate program. Fr. Peter and Brs. Basil, David and Gerald attended from St. Peter's. As part of the New Year's Eve Vesper service, the community had its annual Thanksgiving Service, in which individual members are invited to express thanks for the blessings of the past year.**

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## ST. PETER'S ABBEY NEWSLETTER

Published by the Benedictine community of St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, Saskatchewan, S0K 2Y0, three times a year: February, June and October. Deadline: the 15th of the previous month.

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*Photo credits: Gerald Moran; Sisters of St. Elizabeth*

*Logo designed by Kurt Van Kuren, OSB.*



Gertrude Rompre, Domremy; Joe and Anne Daeger, Muenster; Mrs. Josephine Junk and Mrs. Rose Wolsfeld, Humboldt, were enrolled as Oblate Candidates on the Oblate Day at St. Peter's Abbey on November 21. At the same time Mrs. Laura Bunz, Mrs. Veronica Bergerman, Muenster; Pat Whittaker, Edmonton; Tom Sharp, Camrose, Alberta, made their final oblation as Oblates of St. Benedict.

## Oblates of St. Benedict

We acknowledge with gratitude permission to print the following article from the December, 1987 issue of *Restoration*, published by Madonna House, Combermere, Ontario.

I believe most of our Oblates will remember our Benedictine Oblate Gilbert Mansbridge as the "little old man

dressed in black," but probably knew little more than that about him, except maybe the contributions he made at discussions on our Oblate days, which he regularly attended. He usually spent several days before or after each Oblate day on retreat at the Abbey. This article by Kathy Rodman tells you much more about him. — Fr. Albert

## His love scattered the darkness

By Kathy Rodman

(Note: Father Gilbert Mansbridge, our beloved friend from Regina, Sask., died on Sept. 30 of this year. This article is a tribute to a man we knew as completely dedicated to God and to His poor.)

When he was a young Anglican priest, recently settled from England, a family showed up at his door asking for help. They had been burnt out of their home. He graciously allowed them to spend the night within church property. The family was Indian.

The next day all hell broke loose. Fr. Gilbert was reported to the bishop, and, being unrepentant, was told, "he could have them if he liked them so much." For the rest of his priestly life he was "banished" to the reserves of southern Saskatchewan. His fellow clergymen commiserated with him, saying that he would "never go places" in the diocese.

By the time I met him, his life was already legendary. He was retired, about 70 years of age, a man with an

incredibly deep love and affection for the native people he'd lived with, suffered with and ministered to for so many years. They held a special, though not exclusive place in his heart.

He came often and regularly to Marian Centre to volunteer — serving stew, refilling milk pitchers, passing out bread, quietly disappearing when he thought there was nothing more he could do to help.

The deep bonds of knowledge and friendship between him and almost every man in the dining room were not immediately apparent. The relationships often looked "distant," but in truth they were more often than not intimate, with a deep reverence and recognition of each person's right to a private life.

He didn't flash his relationships around with a well-meaning chumminess. He was much too interiorized to be able to do that. People that I was just beginning to know, were great friends of his. He would happen to mention that Joe or Charlie or someone else had been over to visit him at his residence the night before — one of his many frequent visitors.

The reality of injustice, poverty, hopelessness, and confusion among the native people became more and more apparent to me because of the work and various outreaches of Marian Centre. A people "out of culture" was meeting another people, and everyone was threatened.

Regina has been referred to with good reason as the largest "reserve" in the country. The native population is larger in other cities, but it is proportionally larger in Regina than anywhere else.

The extreme density of native people in some areas of the city heightened the tensions. I began to feel like we were sitting on a keg of dynamite waiting to blow. When the weather was extremely harsh, or a particularly pernicious remark was made publicly, or a tragedy — on a reserve or in the city — had to be lived through, the keg would rumble.

As the months passed to years, I



began to think that perhaps the main reason Regina did not explode into ugly, violent uprisings was Fr. Gilbert. He was like light — pure light.

In his own humanity he absorbed the violence and helped reason to prevail over emotions, as he consoled those who had borne tragedy, listened to the confused, instructed those who were lost. He gave what little he could from his own meagre belongings.

Most important, he was always there for his friends. He forgave them if need be, and asked their forgiveness (on behalf of the rest of us) if the occasion demanded it. And he loved all.

So often I hear love described by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 13, yet almost as often I adjust it down a notch, because otherwise my life would be unmanageable. But I never knew Fr. Gilbert to do that. He was a man of total love . . . always patient, always going the extra mile.

He was received into the Roman Catholic Church — not without a great deal of pain and struggle — in our little chapel at Marian Centre about 1981. Only a handful of people were present. I thought it a great honor for us, but he was only grateful that it wasn't too inconvenient.

He didn't think that he ought to ask for Orders in the Roman Church (it wasn't his way to ask). If God intended it to be, it would be given to him. It never happened.

He was (and is) the holiest man I ever met. There was nothing artificial about him. His whole person had become transformed by the life of Jesus Christ in him. For years, he had lived in darkness and was "subject to periods of depression and fear," which he accepted as a suffering the Lord asked of him.

Fr. Gilbert died a hidden man. His love was nonetheless a brilliant bonfire that quenched fear and darkness. He was hidden from the mighty, but known and beloved by the poor.



# Whatever happened to shorthand?

By E. F. Dyck

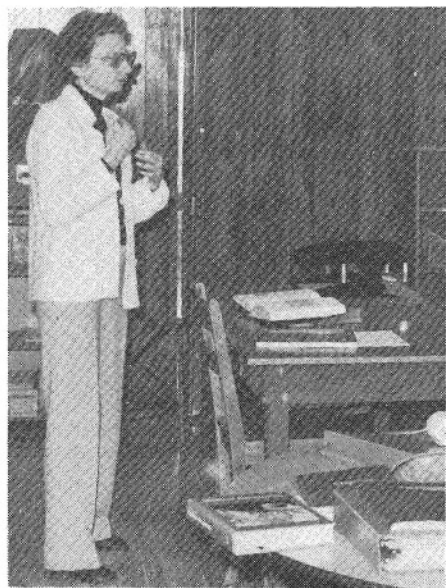
Every year since 1975, about 20 students have trudged up to the second floor of St. Peter's College, five days a week, from September to May. They spend their days studying writing and arithmetic of a rather special kind, plus the arts of information management, communication, and human relations. When they graduate from their one-year Office Education Program, they will be the best spellers and the speediest keyboard operators you will ever meet. And they used to study shorthand.

When you think of an office, you probably think of a (female) secretary doing one of two things: (a) rapidly writing an exotic script in a double-columned, coil-bound notepad on her knee, while her (male) boss dictates portentously from the other side of a mahogany desk; (b) transcribing these shorthand notes into a typewritten letter — "Dear Sir: Regarding your request for 100,000 2-inch grobbits in puce: may we recommend. . . ." While such offices and such practices undoubtedly still exist, the Office Education Program prepares its students for a rather different work experience reflecting contemporary realities. The "boss" is as likely to be female as male, the "typewriter" has probably been replaced by a microcomputer, and the "secretary," male or female, may well be supervising what is best described as desk-top publishing.

To prepare for an office career today evidently requires a mixture of the old and the new. Basic skills such as arithmetic and grammar are never out-dated, but the advent of the computer means that typing has become word processing; old-fashioned virtues such as courtesy and efficiency are still important, of course, but contemporary notions of communication and management go considerably beyond politeness and speed. And so the first semester of the program has all students taking courses like Keyboarding

and Formatting, Human Relations, Oral Communication, and Record Systems and Management. The basics are covered in Spelling, Business English, Business Mathematics, and Business Machines. Two areas of specialization, Accounting and Word Processing, are introduced to all students in the first semester and further developed in semester two — accounting students, for example, study Automated Accounting and Commercial Law, word-processing students branch out into Business Law and Machine Dictation and Transcription. In both semesters, the students have the opportunity to observe and experience the real office.

If this sounds like a lot of work, it is. Students often return in the evenings to a classroom in which nine computer terminals blink and hum their binary logic. Perfection, even in these days of automated accounting and word processing, is not easily attained. But the rewards for perseverance are almost immediate and quite tangible — a certificate after a year of study and excellent prospects for a job. According to Elizabeth Majocha (B.Ed.),



instructor and accounting specialist, any student who can survive the pressure of the program has all the skills needed to succeed in a modern office career. Majocha and co-instructor Laurie Schmit (B.Ed.), word processing specialist, agree that a key quality for success in both training and the job is discipline — and the students have ample opportunity to develop and demonstrate it in the program. Other skills necessary for the program include Grade 12 (an entrance requirement) and a minimal amount of experience in the work-world. Those who wish to continue their studies in office education may do so: the program, sponsored by Carlton Trail Regional College, is the first of a two-year course at the Palliser Campus (Moose Jaw) of SIAST (The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) leading to a Diploma in Office Automation/Administration.

The Office Education Program here at Muenster is unusual in a particular-

ly contemporary way: exactly half of its instructors are male. Queried about how he had managed to break the all-female stereotype of office education, Schmit pointed out that the dominance of the woman in the office is a relatively recent phenomenon: "Until World War I," says Schmit, "most secretaries were male." Elizabeth Majocha wishes that more males would have Schmit's enlightened attitude, but so far, she says, "we haven't had even one male student." Shorthand, like the dodo bird, is apparently extinct, but the microcomputer which caused its demise hasn't yet managed to remove an outdated prejudice. But any course in word processing alone can easily cost \$1,000 — I took a one-day primer that cost me \$120 — and that's about the cost of tuition (\$575) and books (\$450). It's almost enough to make me think of enrolling.

*(Ed Dyck is a guest of St. Peter's Abbey and member of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild.)*

## Impressions of a monastery

My first impression of St. Peter's Abbey was one of utter disappointment. I felt that I had just stumbled upon Canada's version of what a desert is — flat, quite dry and -30C.

The life, however, which I discovered in this barrenness, although hidden, was vibrant and pulsing with a distinct sense of an ancient individuality and a spirituality that most people in today's modern world can only dream about.

I was lucky enough to receive an opportunity of visiting this isolated monastery and to experience a way of life that sings pure notes, just as clear water bubbling over smooth pebbles creates a rhythm that even time cannot break. It was this very song that touched the depths of my being, challenging me to live out my own baptismal vows in the totality of who I am in relation to God, my creator.

The days at St. Peter's are filled with prayer, and this makes all the difference . . . in one's daily activities.

I've learned to seek less strenuously in order that I might find God more fully and have also discovered to thirst after a knowledge that will point out to me who I am, so that I might unravel a little more this mystery of myself. But most importantly, I have learned that poverty of spirit — the ability to stand before God himself, totally naked, vulnerable and open, is reflected and must be reflected in one's lifestyle.

We must be able to grasp hold of ourselves, to take hold, gently, of who we are, so that we can give ourselves in a spirit of servanthood to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

*By Wieke Steynen  
Catholic Bible College of Canada  
Canmore, Alberta*

Something happened at Vigils one night last week.  
 We began to pray. Sometimes singing the Psalms, sometimes reading them.  
 I heard the voice of a Brother behind me.  
 It was wandering.  
 He would, after just reading with us, continue to read with other side; it is  
 the tradition to alternate sides.  
 I smiled to myself and thought, "He is lost in the Psalm."  
 Halfway across that Psalm our brother fell behind our single voice.  
 When we finished the sentence he still had five or six words to say.  
 There was no shuffling,  
 no turning of heads or  
 sighs of impatience —  
 simply a longer pause  
 before the next sentence was heard,  
 in a single voice.

Maria Vanderham  
 C.B.C.C.  
 Feb. 26, 1988

(Maria took in all the chapel exercises of the monks while the Catholic Bible College of Canada was at St. Peter's Abbey during the month of February. She got to know the monks' prayer life very well. — Ed)

"From the bottom of my heart I express my gratitude for all I have found here: love, peace, solidarity, Christ, humanness, hospitality." (R.B.)

Thank you so much for everything. This past month was a wonder experience for me — I will not forget it easily. Thanks to Bro. Gerald for taking such good care of all of us, to the kitchen staff for their patience and wonderful food. To all the monks who took part in our classes — whether as student or teacher; for all the volleyball players (especially to Fr. Peter for losing a game for a change!) And a special thanks to everyone, even the brothers I never spent much time with, for sharing their spirituality and benedictine way of life with all of us of the C.B.C.C. (W.S.)

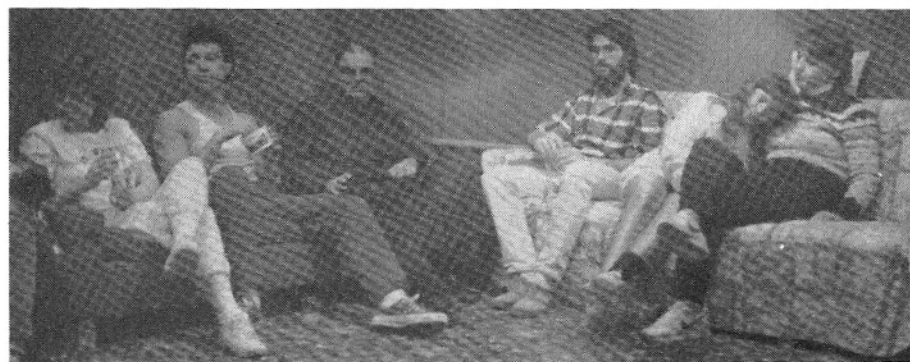
I would just like to express my thanks for the warmth and generosity of the welcome and hospitality extend-

ed by yourself and all of the Community to me during my stay in St. Peter's with the Bible College. I will recall with gratitude the daily celebrations of the Eucharist of which I felt very much a part — it is indeed a great blessing to participate in such a thoughtful and joyous liturgy. May God continue to bless you and your community . . . and may you feel His Presence ever near. (M.G.)

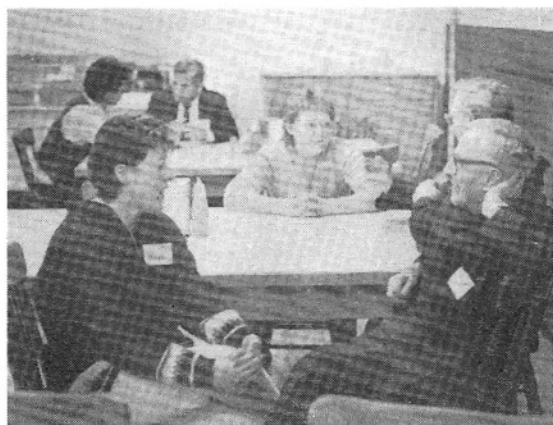
Many times I will thank God, our Creator for you and St. Peter's Abbey. I was looking for an experience of your spirituality that is so rooted in our Catholic heritage. . . . I was looking for answers to questions. . . . You supported my community with a gentleness, humility and love. . . . May you remember the Catholic Bible College of Canada people. . . . I very much appreciate your hospitality and love you shared so readily with us, but I must now return home with my people. (C.S.)



## **Canadian Catholic Bible College photo album**







# Fr. Norbert's Chronicle

*Edited by Gerald Moran*

## November 4

Br. Patrick Genoia and Br. Bernard Lange left for St. Paul, Minneapolis, to return a set of books on Greek Church Fathers to the original purchaser since we already have the set in our library. The two brothers intend to stop over in Richardton, North Dakota, at Assumption Abbey — our nearest Benedictine monastery — before reaching our motherhouse, St. John's Abbey at Collegeville, Minnesota.

## November 6

Four Pius X seminarians are spending the weekend in Severin Hall at the invitation of the abbey — Joe Cabral, Mitch Nault, John Ngyuan and David Kawalski. This is Mitch's first visit to St. Peter's Abbey.

## November 8

Six monks took part in the Festival of Faith held in the Centennial Auditorium in Saskatoon. The monks making up the inter-faith schola for the third annual choral concert were: Peter Novocosky, Lawrence DeMong, Maurice Weber, Nicodemus van Amelsvoort, Joe Wasylyniuk and Gerald Moran.

## November 10

Peter Wilson, a writer/photographer with the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix is living with the community in preparation for a feature article on the abbey, college, press and farm.

## November 14

Hermitess Sr. Suzanne is spending the weekend in Saskatoon at a "live-in-for-Christ" retreat. Br. Stanely Vindevoghel, who is a student at the University of Regina, was home for the weekend. A former college student, Nolan Bodnarchuck, now working at Burns-Hanley in Regina, accompanied Br. Stanley to the abbey to visit acquaintances.

## November 17

A number of community members attended the funeral in St. Peter's Cathedral of Cecilia (Calles) Korte. Mrs. Korte is the mother of Rosemarie Strueby, who fills a large number of key positions at St. Peter's Press. Mrs. Korte was quite active in both the parish and civic community before she became ill.

## November 19

A 15-minute feature on St. Peter's Abbey (a-la-francaise) was shown on the French network of the CBC. Judging by the reaction of those who speak French the documentary was very well produced under the direction of the chief interviewer, Paul John Harel; it was twice as long as we expected. In his interview, the only part given in English, Abbot Jerome summed up the aim and life of a monk of St. Benedict in the words "to seek God."

## November 20

More publicity for the abbey/monastery: today the Saskatoon daily paper, Star-Phoenix, carried a full-page feature on St. Peter's which was credited to the writer/photographer Peter Wilson who spent three or four days interviewing and focusing on monastic life.

## November 22

Brs. John and Gregory Brodner travel to their home town Dysart with John Stewart of Muenster. Tomorrow Fr. Rudolph returns to the Mayo Clinic for the "six-week" check-up.

## November 24

In a letter read at table, Br. Basil Schaan who has been studying at Mt. Angel Abbey in Oregon, announced his decision to discontinue his studies for the priesthood. His letter displayed, as usual, a strong faith and acceptance of God's will. Br. Basil made solemn profession last July 11.

#### November 26

Fr. Lawrence DeMong has been called to the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops' Centre in Ottawa to assist in publishing another volume (or grade) of the Canadian Catechism. This project was begun during his three-year term in Ottawa, which ended two years ago.

#### November 28

Br. Thomas Ward travelled to St. Michael's Retreat House in Lumsden

(near Regina) where GED high school examinations were being written. Br. Thomas is upgrading his education to go into Kelsey Institute this fall.

#### November 29

A college "student-parent" mass was very well attended this morning. This is a eucharist celebration with liturgy prepared and performed by the college students. Their parents are always invited. Father James Gray, who has a very good rapport with the



Nov. 13 — Br. Wolfgang Thiem caught what we hope is the last of a family of five skunks in his home-made skunk trap. See the expression of perfect satisfaction and accomplishment on Br. Wolfgang's face after the fifth skunk was exterminated. Sr. Yvonne Billesberger, OSU, looks on.



**Nov. 15 —** The Saskatchewan Bishops' Statement on Agriculture was signed by the four Saskatchewan bishops of the Latin Rite and Abbot-Ordinary Jerome Weber. The statement attracted a larger crowd of interested people from the abbacy than anticipated; there were between 650 and 700 chairs occupied.

students, was the main celebrant and homilist.

Fr. Edward enjoys these visits from friends and parishioners very much.

#### **November 29**

James Frie of Saskatoon and a former Cudworth parishioner came to the abbey to visit Fr. Edward Benning.

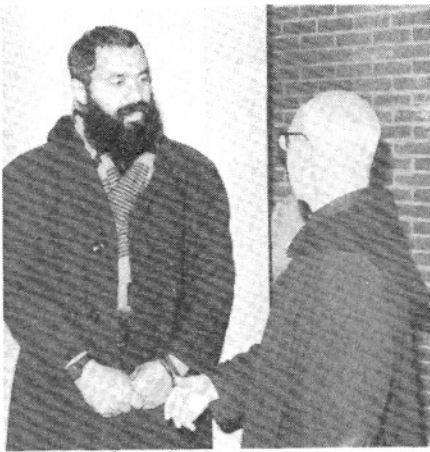
#### **November 30**

Seminarian Gerard Dewar made his pre-deaconate ordination retreat at St. Peter's Abbey. He will be ordained



**Nov. 16 —** Overnight visitors on their way to Cross Lake in Manitoba were Archbishop Peter Sutton (from The Pas), Sister Rose Arsenault, Barbara Portland and Ken Wood. Ken spent a week at the abbey last month on a "working-retreat." He proved himself to be a very talented and generous person. The people of Cross Lake will find a loving and compassionate heart in the person of Ken Wood.



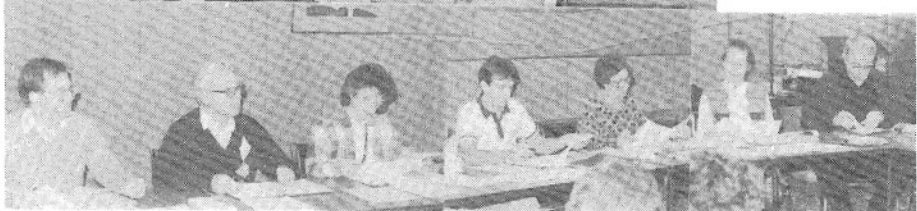
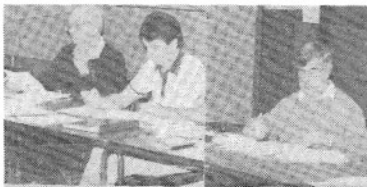


**Nov. 21** — We are graced with a visit of a Byzantine Rite monk from California. Fr. Michael Ukrainiec of Holy Transfiguration Monastery at Redwood Valley made a very brief visit to St. Peter's on his way to Yorkton.

deacon by Bishop Mahoney in Saskatoon the first week in December.

#### **November 30**

A friend of the newsletter editor, Ed Drysdale of Portland, Oregon, received only the outer cover of his issue of the last newsletter. The entire inside pages had slipped out during transit. If this should happen to other recipients please inform us immediately and a replacement will be forwarded.



**Nov. 20** — With about nine members of the National Liturgy Conference as our guests, including Bishops Mahoney (Saskatoon), Lahey (Newfoundland), Doyle (Ontario) and Archbishop Spence of Ontario, Oblate Day scheduled for tomorrow and the abbey newsletter in preparation, Severin Hall is a very busy place this weekend.

#### **November 30**

Fr. Francis Gannon, whose brother passed away in Texas, left this morning for the funeral. Fr. Francis is our second priest-hermit and comes from the Big Sur Camaldolese monastery in California.

#### **December 2**

The Abbacy Presbyterate met this morning in the Abbacy Centre. The two chief topics of discussion were: 1) the catechetical programs in our parishes, which are under the supervision of Sisters Yvonne Billesberger and Celine Graf; 2) a study of the Saskatchewan Bishops' statement on agriculture was presented by Mrs. Debbie Sarauer of Anaheim.

#### **December 2**

Br. Bernard Lange and his brother John travelled to Regina to attend the annual Agribition. This exhibit features a livestock show, machine display, registered and certified seed samples. A representative of the abbey always attends each year.

#### **December 4**

Tomorrow is Sister Genny Falk's last day in the Porter's Office. She is going to the Anaheim rectory to help Fr. Rudolph run the parish. Sr. Genevieve, OSE, has stayed with the three other sisters in St. Scholastica Convent ever since coming here from Cochran's Mt. St. Francis Retreat. She returns to the "home" convent at least once a week for her "days off."



**Part of the Band Welfare administrators who took the Cree language course taught by Dr. Ahab Spence of the University of Regina.**



## Guest photo album



**Lutheran Youth Workers' Retreat. Daryl Solie, co-ordinator.**



**Cree instructor, Dr. Spence, students to line up.**



**Rev. John Risk and his confirmation class.**



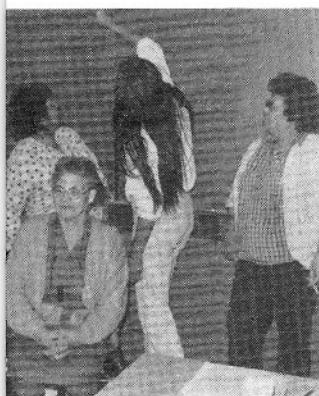
**Grace Lutheran Church**



**m**



**Human Resources Branch of the Saskatchewan Social Services, Carol LaFayette-Boyd, training co-ordinator, met here in January.**



**e, and his wife, wait for the**



**Newman Club of St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon.**



**of Wynyard, Sask., on retreat.**





**Nov. 23 —** Fr. Xavier Benning left this morning to visit his sister, Sr. Benedicta, in her convent infirmary at Dickinson, North Dakota. Sr. Benedicta, who has had a stroke similar to Fr. Edward's, is aged 79 and was here last summer for the 50th wedding anniversary of Tony and Mary Benning, another brother and sister-in-law. Fr. Xavier is shown above with one of his amaryllis in chapel.

#### **December 6**

Fr. Maurice Weber's mother, Mary Amelia Weber, passed away in the Watson hospital. Death had been expected and her family was with her. St. Peter's Chorus performed their annual Christmas concert in St. Peter's Cathedral. Both contemporary and ancient Christmas carols were sung.

#### **December 9**

Several confreres, including Abbot Jerome, attended the wake last evening and the funeral this morning of Mrs. Mary Amelia Weber.

#### **December 10**

The Provincial Diocesan Catechetical Directors are holding a workshop here under the supervision of Abbey Centre personnel.

#### **December 11**

The annual Christmas parent-student supper was held again in the gym. With the main feature of fried chicken catered from outside, the abbey kitchen staff under Mary Torborg's direction prepared the remainder of the delicious meal. Parents and students joined the community in the singing of Vespers prior to the supper.

#### **December 12**

The Humboldt Bible Church spent a day of reflection and study of the Scriptures under the leadership of their minister, Greg Guarnett.

#### **December 13**

If you tried to phone the abbey last night and today, you probably did not get an answer. All phone lines into the abbey and college were out-of-order.

#### **December 19**

The Advent Community Day of Prayer with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 1 to 5 p.m. The laity, sisters and monks spent time of prayer and meditation for 30-minute periods before the Blessed Sacrament. This is one of our extra "non"-liturgical functions of the year.

#### **December 21**

The last of the student monks to come home for Christmas arrived today, Br. Richard Meidl from St. Meinrad's Archabbey in Indiana. The other monks, Brs. Basil, Kurt, Stanley and David have already touched home base; Deacon Brother William, studying at Sant' Anselmo, will not be coming home for Christmas.

#### **December 25**

Br. Francis Fortney was taken to hospital complaining of severe chest pain. He has had problems breathing properly with the asthma condition. Our friends, staff, relatives and Oblates were very generous again this year with their gifts of chocolates, nuts, cookies; we now need enlarged cinctures!





**Dec. 7 —** Fr. Matthew Michel celebrated his 91st birthday today and cut the birthday cake prepared by Mary Torborg at the evening meal. Fr. Matthew often feels tired in the morning (he reads late into the night) but never fails to join the community for supper and recreation (see photo). He celebrates mass every day at 11 a.m. in the abbot's chapel and still plays pool daily. His hair, which is pure white and showing no signs of falling out, is cut on a monthly basis at his insistence. Above is Fr. Matthew in a serious game of pool with Br. Dominic Distel. Peter Wilson of the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix is ready with his camera.

#### **December 29**

Tom Hasiak, a photography student at Ryerson College in Toronto, is preparing a "photo essay" as an assignment for his degree work. Tom, whose home town is Regina, has chosen the abbey for the subject matter of this examination exhibition.

former student spent New Year's Eve at the abbey/college: Bob Tochor and Joe Wasylyniuk are members of this year's "Rez Rats"; Nolan Bodnar-chuck is a former R.R. Theresa Le-Claire, who will be featured in the Prairie Messenger early next year, will spend the New Year with us. Terry had been visiting her sons in Saskatoon.

#### **December 31**

Two residence students and one



**Diocesan Directors of Religious Education for Saskatchewan** gather for a workshop at the Abbey Centre in December of last year. Shown above is Abbot Jerome lining everyone up for a group picture.



**Dec. 24 —** The “young-at-heart” monks are out carolling the hermits and staff who live near the abbey. Jonathan Bonato, a regular guest of Severin Hall, decorated the lobby Christmas tree this year. Here, Jonathan takes a final look at his masterpiece.

#### **January 10**

A number of community members attended the “Come and Go Tea” hosted by Fr. Francis Lohmer and his housekeeper of many years, Celine Wolsfeld. Fr. Edward Benning was able to attend the reception in Humboldt in his wheelchair.

#### **January 12**

Br. David Gauthier informed the community that because of ill health he will not be returning to the University of Saskatchewan for the remainder of this term. Br. David recently received a \$2,000 scholarship.

#### **January 13**

The afternoon was taken up with a Chapter meeting, the main topic of which was the question of proceeding or not proceeding with the building of an abbey church at this time. All postulants have now arrived making a total of six men ranging in age from 25 to 50 (see photo).



**Dec. 26 —** The annual Christmas “family day” for relatives of monks was held again in the gym/arena complex. Card games, visiting, racketball and volleyball seemed to be the most popular entertainment or pass-time. The relatives of novice Randy Senecal came the greatest distance — Rosetown via Arizona — to be here. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Senecal returned from Arizona for the Christmas holidays. Shown above are Elizabeth Saretsky, abbey secretary, Br. Richard Meidl and his aunt, Marie Schneider.



**Postulants Joseph Wasylyniuk from Watrous, Sask., Vincent Regnier of Saskatoon, Joe Silveira of Vancouver, Leo Graf from Fulda, Sask., Frank Boser of Saskatoon and Denis Fortin of St. Leonard, Quebec.**

#### **January 15**

First anniversary of the death of Br. Oswald King. It is also the official beginning of the postulancy program — the feast of St. Maurus and Placidus, two of Benedict's disciples.

Benning rarely admits to more than a weary "fairly well"! His chief caretaker, novice Rene Boulanger, is quite energetic in assisting and persuading him to walk.

#### **January 17**

Asked how he feels, Fr. Edward

#### **January 18**

Those involved in vocations work for the diocese, Fr. Maurice Weber, Sr.



**Jan. 2 — The annual Christmas formation party for all temporary professed and novices was held at St. Peter's. There were seven people able to attend; they were made up of Ursulines and Elizabethans as well as Benedictines. Ursuline Sisters Mary Ann Roetger and Bernadine Fetter are pictured with two surprise visitors: Terry Garchinski of Naicam and his Puerto Rican friend, Oscar.**



**The Abbey Christmas tree is decorated Christmas Eve by Brother Thomas Ward while Fr. Peter Novecosky and Brothers Basil Schaan and Michael McAllister look on.**

Clothilde Gartner and Br. Gerald Moran, attended an abbacy vocation directors' conference in the Abbacy Centre.

#### **January 19**

Br. Nicodemus van Amelsvoort has begun a visiting apostolate ("Pastoral Care") at St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt.

#### **January 20**

The minutes of today's Senior Council meeting indicate that the plans for the construction of an abbey church will proceed.

#### **January 22**

The STM Newman Club retreat filled the guestwing to overflowing. Br. Wolfgang Thiem has been working



**Jan. 16 — The number of couples taking the current Engagement Encounter is unusually large because the last one had to be postponed on account of John Kelly's illness. John and Rita Kelly again conducted this encounter with the aid of Fr. Leo Hinz and Jordan and Donna Lee Bergerman and a support couple from St. Brieux.**





**Feb. 5 —** The C.B.C.C. students and monks held a "get acquainted" wine-and-cheese party sponsored by the Bible College. On Sunday evening the students and monks plan to join together for supper in the large dining room. At least two students are related to members of the community: Juanita Klein is a relative of Fr. Norbert Schwinghammer and Lisa Lester is related to Fr. Lawrence DeMong. Annette and Lisa talk to Sr. Clothilde, OSE.

several weeks in converting two large washrooms, one near the TV room and the other near the novitiate classroom, into utility rooms; the lower washroom will continue to be Br. Michael's candle room and the upper washroom will be converted into a special washroom for the sick; a whirlpool tub similar to that in St. Elizabeth's Hospital will be installed.

#### **January 23**

Weather reporter Br. Nicodemus informs us that we now have 14 inches of snow. We would be grateful for another 14 inches, also.

#### **January 24**

On behalf of the Humboldt Ministerial Association, Fr. Daniel Muyres invited the community to join them in an ecumenical Unity Service in St. Augustine's Church, Humboldt.

#### **January 25**

Br. Basil Schaan is attending a conference re Goals for Canadian Agriculture, building just and sustainable communities. the purpose of the con-

ference was to encourage, educate and empower people in building the rural community. It featured stories of people affected by the rural crisis, a sociological analysis of communities in crisis, youth and rural community, models of successful projects and reflection on the Biblical concept of "The Just Community." The two-day workshop was held at Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask.

#### **January 30**

Suzanne Stoeckle, co-director of the Catholic Bible College of Canada, located in Canmore, Alberta, is here preparing for the arrival of the entire student body of 19. Student Lisa Marie Lester and Suzanne arrived by car in a snowstorm.

#### **January 31**

Almost half of the student body arrived from Canmore with the other half of the Bible College expected tomorrow along with their director Louis Stoeckle.

#### **February 1**

Last night, one of the coldest of the winter, the Fahrenheit and Celsius temperatures almost met, i.e. at 40 degrees. The Alberta students are under the impression that this is typical weather for Saskatchewan.



**Feb. 10 —** The C.B.C.C. students provided most of the music for today's feast of St. Scholastica. There are three guitarists and one flutist among the students and many good voices for "cantoring" the psalms.

## February 2

Abbot Jerome Weber has agreed to teach early Church History to the Catholic Bible College of Canada students in the absence of Fr. Firth, OMI, of Edmonton, who is unable to be here due to illness.

## February 6

Fr. Lawrence DeMong is in Niagara Falls at the Loretto Spirituality Centre working on the Canadian Catechism. He will be away for two weeks.

## February 7

Fr. Daniel Muyres' mother has become seriously ill and is in a Saskatoon hospital. An uncle, Lambert Muyres, passed away in Saskatoon and will be buried in Humboldt.

## February 9

It was decided at the C.A.D.A.C. meeting in Humboldt tonight to accept the offer from St. Peter's Abbey to hold "Camp Colossal" for young people again this coming July. Last summer's camp was very well received by the 20 youngsters attending.

## February 13

Sr. Maristella Richardson, a hermit



Feb. 12 — A public lecture was given by Dr. Harold Stahmer, professor of Religious Studies, University of Florida on theologian Martin Buber. Dr. Stahmer was a visiting professor at St. Thomas More College and he also spoke of his experience at Maria Laach Abbey in Germany, where he lived for one year learning German. Above: Dr. Eugene Tate, Dr. Stahmar and Fr. Maurice Weber.

on our property for the past 14 years, left unexpectedly for Regina where she will reside permanently in her "Janua Coeli." Also today, Frank Boser decided to withdraw from the postulancy program. Rather than return to the big city of Saskatoon, he will take up residence in Humboldt.

Beginning next Monday, the 15th, the University "spring break" begins — a week free of classes; Br. Stanley Vindevoghel arrived home today and pianist, Doug Chase, also at the University of Regina, is spending his spring break on the Yamaha piano in the gym where he intends to perform a concert this April.

## February 14

Fr. Bob Pelten of Madonna House, Combermere, Ontario, arrived today. He will deliver two one-hour lectures each day for the next week to the CBCC students. Several monks besides the postulants and novices will audit the series of lectures on the Biblical View of Man.

## February 15

Sr. Loretta, OSE, of Humboldt, brought visitors from Lumsden to see the abbey. The Franciscans were Br. Dominic Tessier and Fr. Paul Smith. Prof. Andre Oberle of Winnipeg accompanied them.

## February 17

The Bible College "schola" provided most of the music for Ash Wednesday's celebration of the eucharist. A young Dutch student, Wieke Steynen, composed a Sanctus and the Great Amen for today's liturgy and taught her fellow students to sing the four-part harmony.

The postulant who comes from Goa (India) originally, Joseph Silveira, and who makes his home in Vancouver, decided to withdraw from the formation program. He claims the Saskatchewan winters are just too severe. He did arrive on one of the coldest nights in January!

## February 18

Fr. Albert Ruetz' introduced the

following limerick (a five-line humorous poem — named after a town in Ireland) into his homily today:

There once was a pious young priest  
Who lived almost wholly on yeast  
“For,” he said, “it is plain  
We must all rise again  
And I want to get started at least.”

No, the monks do not fast on yeast during Lent, nor was it contemplated at the Presbyterate meeting held at St. Augustine's in Humboldt today.

#### February 19

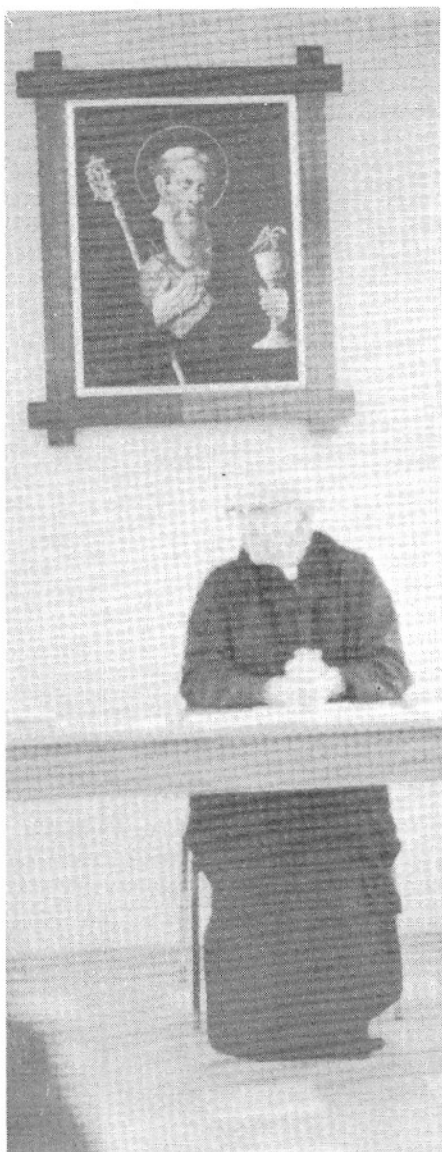
Fr. Camillo Prosdocimo, OMI, chaplain for the students at the Catholic Bible College of Canada, who has been a guest of the Abbey for the past three weeks, has departed for the Grande Prairie district with student Corlia Foster, where they will be engaged in lay apostolate work. While at the abbey, Fr. Camillo produced some beautiful pottery work. A flower vase was donated to the community in appreciation of his stay here, and is on display in the abbey community recreation room.

#### February 21

Twenty-six monks attended the community discussion on our farm. Three reports on what has been done in the past were given; first, by Fr. Xavier, who arrived in 1923 (trees, orchard and vines); Br. Gregory, who has been at the abbey since 1931, mentioned animals, staff, grains, pets, wells, etc., in his paper; and Br. Bernard (since 1948), who is farm manager, spoke about the machinery and what updating has taken place in the past. Future discussions will deal with the present situation and what direction to take in the future.

#### February 24

A “joint clergy day” held at St. Patrick's Parish Centre in Saskatoon including Anglican, Lutheran, Roman and Ukrainian clergy discussed the topic “Justification by Faith.” This document was prepared by the U.S.



Abbot Jerome Weber chairing a community meeting in the Abbey. Behind Father Abbot hangs an “Imhoff” painting of St. Benedict.

Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue VII and is used as a basis for study and general updating.

#### February 25

Fr. Andrew Britz has been invited to St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, to be one of the visitators, an honor for both Fr. Andrew and St. Peter's.

# Brazil mission news report

Dear Father Abbot and Confreres,

Thank you for the Christmas greetings one and all. I surely thought often of you these days, and prayed for you that the season may bring many blessings. But since the 16th of December I have been confined a lot and only now do I feel good to sit at the typewriter.

A stupid big dog insisted on running in front of my motorcycle and I tumbled into the sand on the side of the highway and burned no less than 525 square centimetres of skin on my right leg. There is still some 35 square centimetres to grow shut. It gave me the privilege to wear bermudas to church, and of course wear the alb overtop, and sit for the entire mass. I was touched by so many people coming up to me right at the altar and wish me a quick recovery. They do not fuss about any "rubrics." They show sympathy. For several days I had to go to the hospital three times, but now I have Sebastiana look after it right in the house.

It happened at about the worst possible time for a pastor of a large parish, but the people did get their chance to

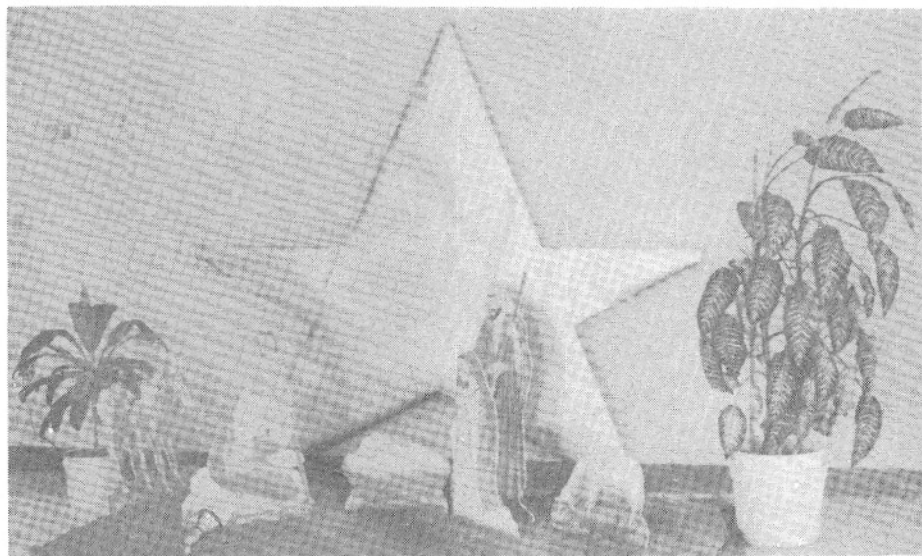
receive the sacraments and celebrate Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Never has Brazil known as despondent a Christmas season as this year. No one is satisfied with the way things are cooked up at the government headquarters. Droughts and floods are taking a toll of many lives of cattle and people. Thousands more have to die a slow death of serious malnutrition and lack of medical attention.

In the diocese where John Molner used to work, Juazeiro da Bahia, the bishop and several priests and laypeople have begun a hunger strike, fasting totally for 24 hours at a time, others always ready to take their turn in the cathedral, until the government comes across with the help they promised to the drought stricken people. That has hit the national news and I hope it will shake some of the big boys.

Over the next few weeks we will have very serious meetings here in Maceio. Too bad one of you could not be present, but please pray lots for us, that we all be open to the Spirit. Greetings to all.

*Father Sylvester*



The chapel nativity scene for 1987 prepared by novices Rene Boulanger and Randy Senecal was co-ordinated and erected by Br. Basil Schaan.



# Student monks write home

Dear Fr. Abbot and community,

Since this is my first community letter this year there is much I could say. We began this year with a full house again, and many new faces.

As usual the Germans and Latin Americans are well represented, but even larger is the English-speaking group. The largest number by far of monks from a single country being the Americans, then the Germans followed by the Italians. Altogether we are from 21 countries, speak 16 different languages, from 73 monasteries, and from 19 different congregations. The total number of monks is 128. It all makes for a very interesting group.

I have been well occupied with diaconal duties so far this year. Although we have four deacons, only two of us are able to read Italian well in public. The other two only minister when we have a Solemnity with two deacons at mass and Vespers. That means that I

am deacon every second week, and now that the other deacon is back home in Austria for Christmas, I am doing all the Christmas liturgies.

But one becomes accustomed to such things, even to the elaborate liturgies we have here. I must say that I am very happy to be able to minister as a deacon and to help the community in that capacity. Besides the conventual masses and Vespers, I have also been invited to function as deacon in the French liturgy on weekdays, but so far I only feel comfortable serving on feast days, because I don't want to torture the native French speakers with my reading of the Gospel every day!

Altogether there are not very many of them. We have two from Belgium, three from France and a Canadian from Oka. He is one of five Trappists in the house at the time; of them, one is from the Polynesian Islands and the others are from the States.

I'd also like to say "courage" and "patience" to Bros. Randy and Rene as you reach the halfway point of your novitiate. Also, I would like to say "welcome" to any of the new postulants that may have arrived, and to the juniors. If I won't be writing you personally, I hope to see you in the summer, probably in July. To the rest of the community I will end with assurance of my not forgetting where I belong, which is to say I pray for all of you, and that I really depend on your prayers for me.

*Pax Christi vobiscum semper,  
Bro. William Thurmeier*

## Rest in peace

In your prayers please remember our deceased confreres and relatives:

Father Maurus J. McBarron — Newark Abbey, New Jersey — Sept. 1.

Father Clement Bloomfield — St. Mary's Abbey, New Jersey — Sept. 23.

Mary Amelia Weber — Watson, Sask., mother of Father Maurice — Dec. 6.

Father Aldrich Huhne — St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn. — Dec. 8.

Father Hugh Wilt — St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, PA. — Dec. 13.

Father Stephen Kelley — St. Gregory's Abbey, Shawnee, Okla. — Dec. 13.

Father Othmar Waltz — St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, PA. — Dec. 16.

Father Robert Roth — Holy Cross Abbey, Colorado — Dec. 24.

Father Odo Zimmerman — Tepeyac, Mexico — Jan. 6/88.

Father Mathias Faue — St. Gregory's Abbey, Shawnee, Okla. — Jan. 30.

Father Herbert John Comyns — St. Bede Abbey, Illinois — Feb. 2.

**That in all things  
God  
may be glorified**

(Benedictine motto)



Elizabeth Majocha teaching a class in Office Education.

## Petrologue

*By Maurice Weber, OSB and Sandra Twardy*

With less than six weeks of classes left, the students are starting to prepare for their final exams. It appears that most professors have assigned at least ONE MORE ESSAY, much to the dismay of the students.

The students' regular routine was broken on Wednesday, March 2, when a "pie throwing" contest in aid of Telemiracle was held. It raised over \$500.

A Variety Night is planned for the evening of Friday, March 11. Usually the college students don't have much time to practice for this event, since it comes during a busy part of their year, but they always come up with some fun and wit to share with the audience. Some of the musical talent is much appreciated for these shows.

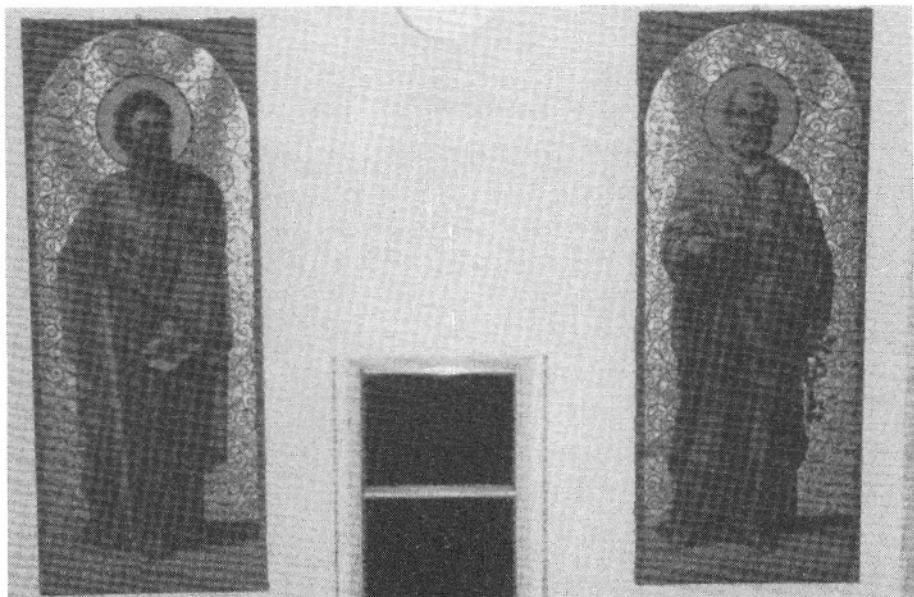
During the month of February we had about 20 people from the Catholic Bible College of Canada (located in Canmore, Alberta) with us. They used our guest facilities and mixed with some of our college students during free times. It seemed to be a good experience for them and for us.

For the past six weeks Father Maurice and Sister Zita have been visiting

schools to advertize the university program at St. Peter's. Some two dozen schools were visited, ranging from Foam Lake in the East to St. Louis and Prince Albert in the West and North. The high school at Imperial was the farthest south we travelled. It seems that the number of Grade 12 graduates is shrinking as the years go by, but it is surprising that we have had the highest number of college students this past year at our school; a total of 86 were registered last fall.

This is also the time when plans have to be made for 1988-89. Most of the offerings will remain the same but it is possible to offer a Canadian Literature class next year. Other possibilities will be discussed at the Executive Council meeting.

It is always nice to have past students drop in for a visit. Recently we had the chance to visit with the family of Lorne Mamer who graduated in 1968 from our high school, as well as Michael Possberg who took first-year Arts and Science with us in 1981-82. Remember that you are always welcome to come for a visit and help us catch up alum affairs.



**Jan. 3 — Sts. Peter and Paul are hanging again. The two familiar paintings of these saints which used to hang on either side of the altar in the college chapel now hang in the stairwell of the abbey. They bring back pleasant memories for former student-monks.**

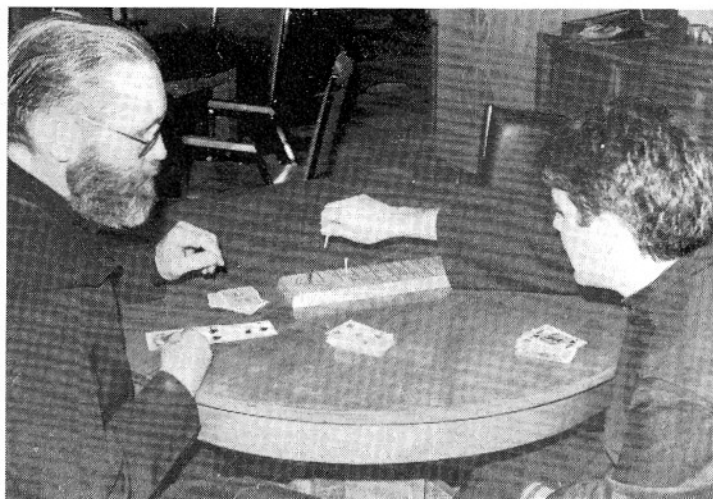


**Photo taken from the 1954-55 edition of Petrologue showing the Imhoff paintings of Sts. Peter and Paul in their original location, the College chapel.**

**With Father Xavier Benning are: Rudolph Novecosky, Arnold Brockman, Vernon Weisgerber, Laverne DeMong in the front row and Richard Doecker, Bernard Benning and Joseph Balzer in the back row.**

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